

CHORUS.

Enter CHORUS.

O for a muse of fire, that would
ascend
The brightest heaven of invention¹!
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling
scene!
Then should the warlike Harry, like
himself,
Assume the port of Mars; and, at his
heels,
Leashed in like hounds, should famine,
sword, and
fire,
Crouch for employment³. But pardon,
gentles all,

¹ O for a muse of fire &c ¹ This goes upon the notion of the Perinatetic system which imagines several heavens one above another the last and highest of which was one of fire.

WARBURTON

It alludes likewise to the aspiring nature of fire which by its levity at the separation of the chaos took the highest seat of all the elements. JOHNSON.

"This" says Dr Warburton ** goes upon the notion of the Perinatetic system which imagines several heavens one above another the last and highest of which was one of fire " We have here one of the very best specimens of the doctor's flights of fancy Shakespeare in all probability knew nothing of the Perinatetic philosophy he simply wishes for poetic fire and a due portion of inventive genius The other explanation by Dr Johnson seems likewise too refined. DOUCE.

Z - princes to act
- And monarchs to behold * -
Shakespeare does not seem to set distance enough between the performers and spectators.

JOHNSON

N
S Leashed in like hounds, should FAMINE,
SWORD and PEHR
Crouch for employment ¹ In King Henry VI "I can see famine quartering steel and climbing fire/* are called the three attendants on the English General Lord Talbot and as I suppose are the *dogs of war* mentioned in Julius Caesar

This image of the warlike Henry very much resembles Montfaucon's description of the Mars discovered at Bresse who leads a lion and a lioness in couples, and crouching as for employment.

TOILET

Warner in his Albion's England 1602
sneaking of King
Henry V says:
** He led good fortune in *a line*, and
did but war and win."